published in 2006 by Central Pollution Control Board, 29000 million liters per day (mld) of sewage is generated from cities and towns in the country. A treatment capacity of around 6200 mld (*i.e.* 21 % approximately) is available in the country out of which 2924 mld capacity has been created under the River Conservation Plans and the balance created by the State Governments out of their own resources. The capacity utilization of the treatment facilities depends upon the operational efficiency achieved by different States through uninterrupted power supply and proper operation and maintenance of the assets.

(b) With the pollution abatement works completed so far in both the phases under Ganga Action Plan which also involved creation of a sewage treatment capacity of 1747 mld., the water quality of the river Ganga has shown improvement at major locations over its pre-GAP quality according to the water quality monitoring done by independent reputed institutions of the country. In respect of river Yamuna, the quality of river water has not shown the desired improvement owing to the large gap between the demand and the availability of sewage treatment capacity particularly in Delhi, and the lack of availability of fresh water for ensuring minimum flow in the river. The works in respect of other rivers are at different stages of completion.

Conservation of rivers is a dynamic activity with the ever increasing pollution load due to increase in population. Review of the strategies of conservation policy and identification of additional towns and rivers is a continuous process. Water being a State subject, it is the responsibility of State Governments to create proper sewerage infrastructure to prevent pollution from entering the rivers. Central Government only supplements the efforts of the State Governments by providing one time grant for capital works for identified polluted stretches. National River Conservation Plan is a major programme of the Government. A total amount of about Rs.2981 crore has been spent till March, 2007 towards pollution abatement works in the rivers of the country, which includes States' share in the projects.

(c) While sanctioning the projects under NRCP, the State Governments and the Implementing Agencies are encouraged to recycle and reuse the treated sewage wherever possible, in order to reduce the fresh water requirements.

**Recycling of wastes**

2503. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is 10-15 years behind compared to countries like Switzerland and Germany in terms of recycling the wastes;

(b) if so, the reason therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to make use of wastes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India have notified the Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2000 and 2003 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These rules regulate the collection, storage, transportation,

treatment, disposal, export, import and recycling of hazardous wastes listed in the Schedules annexed to these rules.

Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India has provided a scheme for registration of recyclers and re-processors for hazardous waste recycling and reprocessing units in order to ensure that such wastes are recycled in an environmentally sound manner. The recycling and reprocessing of hazardous wastes is allowed to be carried out only by the units registered as recyclers with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and having environmentally sound management facilities for recycling such wastes. The list of registered recyclers is available with the CPCB's website *www.cpcb.nic.in.*

**Building of a hotel near the base camp of Mount Everest**

2504. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that China has built a hotel and other facilities near the base camp of Mount Everest;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these constructions are having an adverse effect on the Himalayas;

(c) whether his Ministry has started any consultation/discussion with the Chinese counterpart on protecting the Himalayas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Threat to existence of tigers**

†2505. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the threat to the existence of tigers is not averting despite all efforts by Government in this regard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as per the figures of the Wildlife Institute, mere 1300 to 1500 tigers exist presently in the country; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor together with the concrete steps which are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) The All India estimation of tigers and other wild animals, including habitat status evaluation, is ongoing as per the revised, enhanced methodology endorsed by the Tiger Task Force from November, 2005. The tiger estimation figures relating to four States (Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra) indicate a decline in tiger population in areas outside tiger reserves and protected areas.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.